



EMC News

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Chair's Report

The EMC's and Board of Representatives' resolutions about FLNF mineral rights leasing have spurred healthy debate and also some unfounded criticism of both groups. On the day our Environmental Review Committee's op-ed piece appeared in the Ithaca Journal, another op-ed piece ran criticizing the EMC and BOR. The writer said the EMC failed to conduct an in-depth analysis and implied this was due to the BOR's lack of support for the EMC. He said the BOR's elimination of the EMC's separate budget line and failure to provide adequate staff were to blame because they restricted the EMC's ability to perform independent studies based on in-depth analyses.

I could not disagree more with the writer of that op-ed piece. The Environmental Review Committee performed an exhaustive analysis of the issues. I seriously doubt any amount of funding from the BOR would have changed that committee's recommendation. Funding and staffing are not even relevant since the committee has resident experts (including a geologist) and saw no need to hire outside experts or utilize staff for research. But had the committee felt the need to hire an outside expert, it could have with the money in the EMC's line item budget provided by the BOR. (Yes, the EMC has a budget, despite the writer's claims to the contrary.)

The writer says the EMC was funded "in the past" for studies such as the Unique Natural Areas survey and implies such funding is not available today for the EMC. This ignores the fact that the County devoted significant funds and resources to the UNA project in 1999 and 2000, the not-so-distant past. I am not aware of any BOR change in attitude to the EMC since then. We haven't received funds and resources this year on the scale of those devoted the UNA project simply because we have not asked for or needed them.

I feel the BOR's support of the EMC (through staffing and budget) are solid. The BOR has been turning to the EMC for assistance and opinions on a variety of environmental issues, and the relationship between these two groups is on good footing.

Some people disagree with the EMC's analysis of the issues regarding the FLNF, and I have no problem with that. I do feel irked, however, when people base their criticism on assumptions that are plain wrong.

Enough on my soap box. The EMC's work continues, and September's meeting points the way towards what may

become another long term EMC project. DEC Supervising Forester Dave Forness will talk to us about management plans his office is developing for state forests in Tompkins County. He will also talk about the fact that natural gas companies are starting to make inquiries about leasing mineral rights in our state forests. The federal government owns a substantial portion of these rights. This could become the next big issue--please invite anyone who might be interested in this topic to attend our September 12 meeting.

Submitted by Susan Brock

County Towers Committee

The Wireless Planning Workshop with Ted Kreines was held on July 30. The workshop was sponsored by the Tompkins County Municipal Officials Association, Tompkins County Environmental Management Council, and the Tompkins County Board of Representatives.

Mr. Kreines, who works with state and local governments around the country, advised that municipalities need more than tower ordinances to deal effectively with the private wireless industry. He said municipalities should stop using the term "towers" to describe personal wireless facilities. Cell sites can be located - and disguised - on buildings, lamp posts, or other short structures. It is possible for the cellular industry to use many more sites to gain coverage. The sites use lower power and can be much shorter than the traditional towers.

Rather than depend on tower ordinances which do not address alternative cell siting, Mr. Kreines advised municipalities to adopt a wireless master plan. Municipalities have many options for dealing with industry proposals. While the wireless industry generally cannot be denied the right to provide service, federal law and court decisions show that towns can have a strong say in how that service is provided. More information is available on the Kreines & Kreines' website <www.planwireless.com>.

Submitted by Susan Brock

**Next EMC Meeting
September 12, 2001**



Energy Saving Tip of the Month



Solar Powered Clothesline

An ancient technology had been revamped for the new millennium! Be the first on your block to fly the banner of environmental sustainability. Clothes dryers are major energy hogs, especially electric ones. A typical electric dryer uses six kilowatts per load, and accounts for about 25 percent of a household's energy use for the year. This also contributes one ton of carbon dioxide a year to the planet. Why not use the free energy from the sun? In his book "Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet", John Ryan lists clotheslines fourth. Almost everyone has a space in their yard to install one. I recommend using green plastic covered aluminum wire for it's longevity and hardwood clothespins. Your laundry will be fluffy and fresh smelling. In the winter, buy a durable wooden clothes rack, and contribute valuable humidity to your house.

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

No Reports Submitted

Coordinator's Report

Environmental Review Committee

Pesticide Committee Report

Education Committee Report

Executive Committee Report

Water Resources Committee Report